

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-18

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8615

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PRETORIA 3289

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, SF

SUBJ: CARLETONVILLE SHOOTINGS

REF: PRETORIA 3262, 3265, 3271

1. IN ANSWER TO SWELLING DEMANDS THAT SHOOTINGS BE THOROUGHLY
INVESTIGATED AND CAUSES OF RIOT BE SET RIGHT, PRIME MINISTER
VORSTER HAS ANNOUNCED THAT JUDICIAL INQUEST WILL BE HELD
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE INTO DEATHS OF AFRICAN WORKERS AT WESTERN
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DEEP LEVELS MINE.

2. SPEAKING AT TRANSVAAL NATIONAL PARTY ANNUAL CONGRESS IN PRETORIA LATE EVENING SEPTEMBER 12, VORSTER EXPRESSED PERSONAL REGRET OVER LOSS OF LIFE AND SYMPATHY FOR FAMILIES OF THOSE KILLED AND WOUNDED AT CARLETONVILLE. HE SAID THAT OVER THE YEARS, AS SHOWN DURING NATAL STRIKES EARLIER THIS YEAR, POLICE HAD ACTED WITH GREAT RESPONSIBILITY, AND THEY HAD DONE SO AGAIN AT CARLETONVILLE. IT WAS EASY FOR ARMCHAIR CRITICS TO SAY WHAT POLICE SHOULD HAVE DONE UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES, HE SAID, BUT HE WONDERED WHAT THESE CRITICS WOULD HAVE DONE IN SAME POSITION. MOREOVER, HE SAID IT SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS WAS NOT AN ORDINARY STRIKE DEMONSTRATION BUT LOOTING MOB THAT FACED POLICE. IT WAS SIGNIFICANT, IN THIS CONNECTION, THAT WORK WENT ON AS USUAL SEPTEMBER 12 AND THERE WAS NO FURTHER STRIKE ACTION. IN ORDER TO LAY ALL FACTS BEFORE PUBLIC, VORSTER ANNOUNCED THAT JUDICIAL INQUEST WOULD BE HELD AS SPEEDILY AS POSSIBLE AND THAT FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS WOULD BE MADE AFTER THE INQUEST, IF NECESSARY. HE WAS CONFIDENT THESE INVESTIGATIONS WOULD EXONERATE POLICE.

3. VORSTER THUS WENT SOME WAY TO ANSWER SWELLING DEMANDS FOR FULL INVESTIGATION INTO CARLETONVILLE SHOOTINGS. PROGRESSIVE PARTY MP MRS. HELEN SUZMAN TOLD PRESS SEPT 12 THAT, IN HER OPINION, SHOOTINGS PROBABLY WOULD NEVER HAVE TAKEN PLACE IF POLICE HAD BEEN PROPERLY TRAINED IN RIOT CONTROL METHODS. CIRCUMSTANCES OF SHOOTINGS DEMANDED IMMEDIATE INDEPENDENT INQUIRY. IN LONG RUN, SHE SAID, LESSON TO BE LEARNED FROM SHOOTINGS WAS THAT ADEQUATE MACHINERY MUST BE ESTABLISHED SO THAT AFRICANS CAN VOICE THEIR GRIEVANCES BEFORE THESE REACH EXPLOSIVE LEVELS.

4. UNITED PARTY SPOKESMAN ON JUSTICE MATTERS MIKE MITCHELL SAID IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE, ON THE AVAILABLE EVIDENCE, TO JUDGE WHETHER POLICE HAD BEEN RIGHT OR WRONG TO OPEN FIRE AND HE CALLED FOR COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO EVENTS AND THEIR CAUSES.

5. GEOFF BUDLENDER, CHAIRMAN OF NUSAS NATIONAL COUNCIL, SAID INCIDENTS LIKE THIS WOULD CONTINUE UNTIL GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY GAVE ATTENTION TO BASIC UNDERLYING ISSUES -- FULL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RIGHTS FOR AFRICANS AND PAYMENT OF HUMAN WAGES.

6. KWAZULU CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER CHIEF GATSHA BUTHELEZI CONDEMNED SHOOTINGS AS "INDICATION THAT A BLACK LIFE IS REGARDED AS VERY CHEAP IN SOUTH AFRICA." HE POINTED OUT THAT MANY OF THE MINERS AT CARLETONVILLE WERE FOREIGN AFRICANS AND THAT THIS TYPE OF INCIDENT COULD ONLY HARM SOUTH AFRICA'S IMAGE ABROAD.

7. SPEAKING AT MEETING OF VERLIGTE ACTION IN CAPE TOWN
SEPTEMBER 12, MRS. LUCY MVUBELO, GENERAL SECRETARY OF NATIONAL
UNION OF CLOTHING WORKERS, CALLED FOR RECOGNITION OF OFFICIAL
AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS TO ENSURE BETTER COMMUNICATION BETWEEN
MANAGEMENT AND WORKERS. IF THERE HAD BEEN PROPER COMMUNICATION
AT WESTERN DEEP LEVEL MINE, SHE SAID, INCIDENT WOULD NOT
HAVE OCCURED.

8. ARTHUR GROBELAAR, GENERAL SECRETARY OF TRADE UNION COUNCIL
OF SOUTH AFRICA, SAID LABOR UNREST WHICH PRECEDED SHOOTINGS
STEMMED FROM WHITE MANAGEMENT'S INABILITY TO COMMUNICATE
PROPERLY WITH AFRICAN MINERS. HE SAID IT WAS HIS READING OF
SITUATION THAT ANGLO-AMERICAN CORPORATION HAD TREATED WITH
ITS EMPLOYEES OUT OF HIGHEST MOTIVES, BUT IT WAS CLEAR
THAT IT HAD FAILED TO GAIN MINERS' UNDERSTANDING.

9. AMONG NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS, SEPTEMBER 13 DIE TRANSVALER
EXPRESSED CONDOLENCES TO FAMILIES OF THOSE KILLED AND
CALLED FOR THOROUGH INVESTIGATION OF SHOOTING. IT SAID THAT
INVESTIGATION WOULD SHOW THAT CRITICISM OF POLICE WAS ILL-
CONSIDERED AND THAT REAL CAUSE OF TRAGEDY WAS AFRICAN
SALARY GRIEVANCE. DIE VOLKSBLAD, BLOEMFONTEIN'S NATIONALIST
DAILY, REGRETTED THE DEATHS AND PREDICTED THAT BITTERNESS
AND HATRED OF SOUTH AFRICA WILL BE SWEEPED TO NEW HEIGHTS AS
NEWS OF CARLETONVILLE SHOOTINGS REACHES OUTSIDE WORLD. IT
MAINTAINED THAT POLICE MUST HAVE RIGHT TO MAINTAIN LAW AND
ORDER, "EVEN IN A DRASTIC MANNER." CAPE TOWN ARGUS DECLINED
TO COMMENT ON SHOOTING UNTIL FULL FACTS ARE KNOWN. IT SAID
THAT JUDICIAL INQUIRY WAS REQUIRED AT THIS STAGE. NATAL
MERCURY ALSO CALLED FOR AN INQUIRY INTO EFFECTIVENESS
AND SOPHISTICATION OF RIOT CONTROL TECHNIQUES AVAILABLE TO
POLICE. IT DESCRIBED RIOT AS ANOTHER SYMPTOM OF INCREASING
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TENSIONS AND FRUSTRATIONS IN AN APARTHEID SOCIETY. EAST LONDON'S
DAILY DISPATCH CALLED FOR BETTER PAY FOR POLICE AND "MORE
TRULY MULTI-RACIAL" POLICE FORCE.

10. FINALLY, LEADER OF FAR-RIGHT WING HERSTIGTE NASIONALE
PARTY DR. ALBERT HERZOG ADDED HIS USUAL DISCORDANT NOTE BY
ASCRIBING CARLETONVILLE SHOOTINGS TO GOVERNMENT'S WEAK
HANDLING OF COUNTRY'S AFFAIRS, I.E. ITS ALLEGED SOFTNESS ON
BLACKS AND LIBERALS. SMITH

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